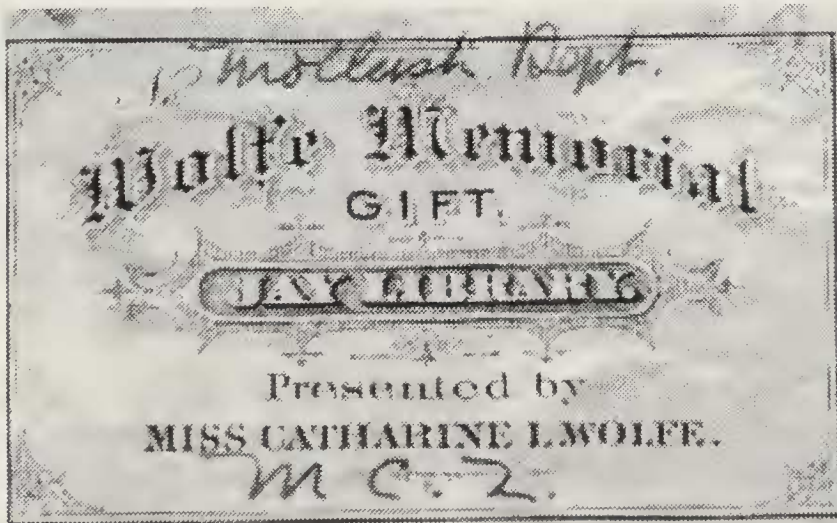


ON THE PROVENANCE OF CERTAIN BOOKS IN
THE DEPARTMENT OF MOLLUSKS: ALAS, A
CORRECTION AND ADDITIONAL NOTES ON
JOHN CLARKSON JAY, M.D.

Richard I. Johnson

The note with a similar title which appeared in this series (Johnson, 1998: 466) contained an egregious error. It stated that Catherine I. [sic] Wolfe gave the shell collection and library of her father, Dr. John Clarkson Jay to the American Museum of Natural History in his memory. This collection was given to the American Museum of Natural History, but not by Dr. Jay's daughter. Jay was a wealthy physician from Rye, New York who died at the age of eighty-four in 1881. He had previously sold his shell collection and library to Catherine Wolfe, which he claimed had cost him \$35,000. It consisted of some 14,000 species represented by 50,000 specimens for which she paid him the princely sum of \$10,000. The collection of Augustus



(Book plate in the copy of Jay's Fourth Catalogue sold by the American Museum of Natural History.)

A. Gould, consisting of some 10,000 lots with type specimens representing over 350 species (Johnson 1964: 31) had been sold to the New York State Museum for \$6,000 in 1867.

In addition to four catalogues of the collection, which attest to its growth, Jay published descriptions of new species in the second and third of these accompanied by plates, hand colored in some copies. He also published several other malacological works all listed below. Richards and Old (1969:4) were able to locate type specimens of all but eight of the some 40 species Jay described. Gratacap (1900: 20) mentioned that, in April 1871, a short time after the Museum opened, its first president, John David Wolfe died, and that it was *his* daughter, Miss Catherine Lorillard Wolfe who, soon thereafter, presented the Jay collection and conchological library, in his memory, as the museum's first memorial gift.

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